

Cross Sectional Study: Students Perspectives on the Orientation Programme for First Year MBBS Students from Northern Kerala

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Abstract

MBBS or bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery is one of the longest and toughest course in any university. The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade, a calling, not a business- a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head [1]. Students entering Medical College come from different backgrounds and have different expectations. They are faced by multiple problems like home sickness, peer pressure, ragging, language and other adjustment problems. Along with these problems different study environment and new medical subjects would make them more stressed. Rising above all these teething problems, there is a need to appreciate the nature of their chosen profession Hence MCI has set clear regulations regarding the crucial foundation course or orientation programme to shape them into model doctors. According to the Medical Council of India Vision 2015, Foundation course or orientation programme will be of 2 months duration after admission to prepare a student to study Medicine effectively. Orientation programme is mainly intended to familiarize a person to a new programme or environment. It should be the first task of any organization and can be conducted in the form of a conventional orientation program (OP) or merely a walk around the establishment. It has got a role in lowering the anxiety of new workplace, and would be beneficial for both faculty and for new students. The Foundation course or orientation program should enable the student to acquire enhanced skills in: i) Language, ii) Interpersonal relationships, iii) Communication, iv) Learning including self or directed learning, v) Time management, vi) Stress management, vii) Use of information technology and train the students to provide: i) First aid ii) Basic life support [2]. Many medical colleges in India are running Orientation programme for new MBBS entrants of varying duration of 1-3 days. [3,4]. In this scenario the medical education unit of P K Das Institute of Medical sciences developed and conducted an orientation programme of four days duration for first year MBBS students. The program was structured around 8 core areas - 1) orientation in the clinical departments of hospital, 2) the qualities of an ideal doctor, 3) doctor patient relationship and ethics, 4) biomedical waste disposal, 5) medical teacher student relationship, 6) how to give a first aid in emergency, 7) how to be a leader in a group and 8) how to give a summary on the discussions. The sessions included use of innovative methods such as skits, role play and student team building exercises after an initial ice-breaking session. Sessions were all interactive requiring active participation from both the students and the faculties. The program ended on a positive note on the 4th day, with a short feedback from the student representative and staff representative. The orientation program was first one of this kind held and to know the strengths and weaknesses of this programme for further improvement an evaluation was conducted from students perspective. *Aim & Objectives* 1. To evaluate the orientation programme conducted among first year MBBS students, from students perspective. 2. To evaluate the overall teaching skills of the faculties who had conducted the Orientation program.

Keywords: Orientation Programme; Foundation Course; Interpersonal Relationship; Time Management.

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Introduction

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your heart will be exercised equally with your head [1].

Students entering Medical College come from different backgrounds and have different expectations. They are faced by multiple problems like home sickness, peer pressure, ragging, language and other adjustment problems. Along with these problems different study environment and new medical subjects would make them more stressed. Rising above all these teething problems, there is a need to appreciate the nature of their chosen profession Hence MCI has set clear regulations regarding the crucial foundation course or orientation programme to shape them into model doctors. According to the Medical Council of India Vision 2015, "Foundation course or orientation programme will be of 2 months duration after admission to prepare a student to study Medicine effectively. Orientation programme is mainly intended to familiarize a person to a new programme or environment. It should be the first task of any organization and can be conducted in the form of a conventional orientation program (OP) or merely a walk around the establishment. It has got a role in lowering the anxiety of new workplace, and would be beneficial for both faculty and for new students.

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The sessions included use of innovative methods such as skits, role play and student team building exercises after an initial ice-breaking session. Sessions were all interactive requiring active participation from both the students and the faculties. The program ended on a positive note on the 4th day, with a short

feedback from the student representative and staff representative. The orientation program was first one of this kind held and to know the strengths and weaknesses of this programme for further improvement an evaluation was conducted from students perspective.

Aim & Objectives

1. To evaluate the orientation programme conducted among first year MBBS students, from students perspective.
2. To evaluate the overall teaching skills of the faculties who had conducted the Orientation program.

Methodology

A cross-sectional study was conducted on the evaluation of orientation program held on October 2015 for first year MBBS students of PK Das institute of Medical Sciences, Vaniamkulam, Ottappalam. MBBS students of 2015 -16 batch were included in the study. After obtaining an IEC clearance and verbal oral consent from students, participants were included for the study. The universal sampling is used and all students attended the orientation program were included. Data collection was done by means of anonymous, standardized, validated questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed with a view to elicit student response in respect to their prior knowledge, gain in knowledge and need for further knowledge on each topic. Questionnaire had questions on a Likert scale 1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree on Programme structure and feed back and contribution to learning . For analysing the overall quality of Orientation program, each category were given a scoring starting from 1 to 5 and total scores were calculated and classified based on Adhoc classification. The scores varied from 11-55 and classified into following classification 11-25 - negative, 26-40 - Neutral and 41-55 as positive.

Faculties who had conducted the orientation program was evaluated at the end of session on teaching and availability skills by the students. The rating was done by 1) moderate 2) satisfactory 3) very good & 4) excellent scale. There were 11 questions on faculty evaluation. The students were also asked to indicate the extent to which, various topics delivered in the orientation program helped them to understand the skills and attributes required by a medical professional along with a need to understand a

different learning environment in the midst of cultural diversity. As anonymous questionnaires were used, students were given a space to express their views without fear of judgement.

Data Analysis

The data was collected, coded and entered into Microsoft Excel 2007. The whole data was rechecked and analyzed using statistical software SPSS Version 16. After collection of filled-questionnaire, data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The Chi-square test (χ^2) was used for finding out association between various categorical variables. P value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant. Recommendations for the change in the OP were submitted to the higher authorities.

Results & Discussion

Out of 150 students of 2015-16 batch only 138 could attend the orientation program, since 12 of them joined the institution after 2nd/3rd counselling. Out of 138 students majority 78(56.5%) were girls. Mean age was 18.86 + 0.79 ranging from 17 to 21. Majority of students, 71 (51.4%) belonged to age 19 followed by

age 18 ie 40 students (29%).

Out of 138 students attended the orientation program, 67 (48.6%) students agreed and 38 (27.5%) students strongly agreed that the overall quality of the course was excellent. Whereas 3 (2.2%) students strongly disagree and 8 (5.8%) students disagree the overall course quality and 22 (15.9%) of them had a neutral opinion. This indicates that the overall quality of orientation program was good, even though slight modification is needed (Figure 1).

Further analysis was done on adding the scores of 11 question on program structure & contribution to learning and classified based on Adhoc classification mentioned in the methodology. The mean response score was 39.57 ± 5.24. Out of total students, 74 (53.6%) of students had a positive response and 61 (44.2%) of students had neutral response. Only 3 (2.2%) of students had negative response. Figure 2. There is a statistically significant difference between the level of response to orientation program and sex of the students (p value - <0.001) Table1. Out of 78 female students, 58 (74.4%) of students had positive response and none of them had negative response. Out of 60 boys, only 16(26.7%) had positive response and 41(68.3%) and 3 (5%) of students had neutral and negative response respectively.

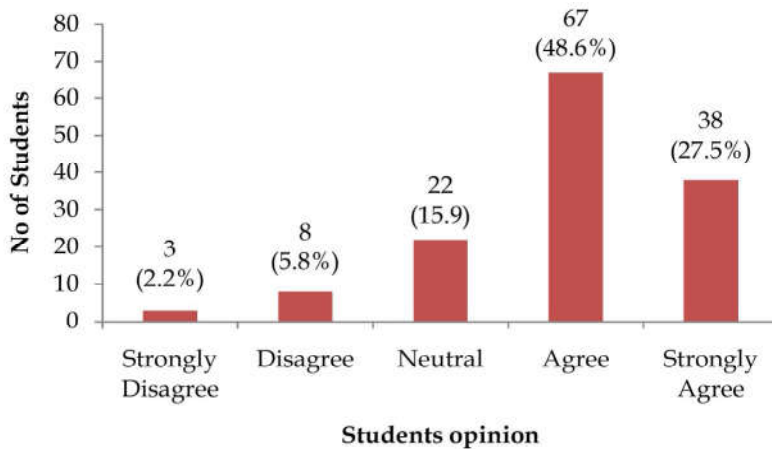


Fig. 1: Distribution of students opinion on overall quality of orientation program

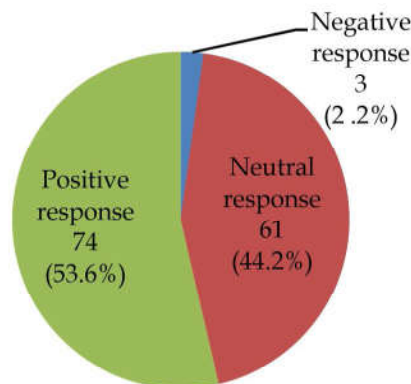


Fig. 2: Distribution of students according to level of response towards orientation program

The program structure was evaluated using a questionnaire having two sections. One part contains questions on content of program covering general structure, assessment, content and workload of program. Second part contain questions on contribution to learning. Results were expressed in Likert's scale.

In this study majority of students 64 (46.4%) and 27 (19.6%) agreed and strongly agreed that the program was comprehensive, clear and accurate. About half of the students 72 (52.2%) agreed that the learning goals were clearly stated and 30 (21.7%) of students strongly agreed for the same. There was a question on timing of orientation program and 50

(36.2%) of students agreed that the classes started and ended on time, whereas 31 (22.5%) of students disagree for the same question and 31 (22.5%) of students had a neutral opinion. This indicates that time management of orientation program was improper. About half of the students 69 (50%) had agreed that the assessment program allowed them to demonstrate what they had learned from the orientation program, but 33 (22.9%) of students had neutral opinion for the same. Out of total students attended the orientation program 60 (43.5%) of students had agreed that the content covered was challenging, but 49 (35.5%) of students had neutral opinion and 50 (36.2%) of students had agreed that the program required lot of preparation (Table 2).

Table 1: Association between level of response to orientation program and sex of the students

Sex	Level of Response			Total	Significance
	Negative	Neutral	Positive		
Male	3 (5%)	41 (68.3%)	16 (26.7%)	60	Fischer's Exact value - 34.5 P value - <0.001
Female	0	20 (25.6%)	58 (74.4%)	78	
Total	3	61	74	138	

Table 2: Distribution of students opinion on general structure and content of orientation program

Sl. No	Particulars	Strongly disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Agree N (%)	Strongly Agree N (%)
General Structure						
1.	The program was comprehensive, clear & accurate.	5(3.6%)	8(5.8%)	34(24.6%)	64(46.4%)	27(19.6%)
2.	The learning goals clearly stated.	5(3.6%)	6(4.3%)	25(18.1%)	72(52.2%)	30(21.7%)
3.	Classes started and ended in time.	5(3.6%)	31(22.5%)	31(22.5%)	50(36.2%)	21(15.2%)
Feedback & Assessment						
4.	Assessment allowed the student to demonstrate what he/she had learnt during the program	4(2.9%)	14(10.1%)	33(23.9%)	69(50%)	18(13%)
Content & Workload						
5.	Content was challenging	3(2.2%)	11(8%)	49(35.5%)	60(43.5%)	15(10.9%)
6.	Program required lot of preparation	7(5.1%)	14(10.1%)	47(34.1%)	50(36.2%)	20(14.5%)

Table 3: Distribution of students opinion on contribution on learning of orientation program

Sl. No	Particulars	Strongly disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Agree N (%)	Strongly Agree N (%)
Contribution on Learning						
1.	Stated goals for the program were met	4 (2.9%)	8 (5.8%)	34 (24.6%)	74 (53.6%)	18 (13%)
2.	Program improved oral communication skills	6 (4.3%)	18 (13%)	44 (31.9%)	55 (39.9%)	15 (10.9%)
3.	Program helped to develop creative ability	2 (1.4%)	15 (10.9%)	36 (26.1%)	58 (42%)	27 (19.6%)
4.	Program helped to reason better and think more critically.	5 (3.6%)	10 (7.2%)	26 (18.8%)	63 (45.7%)	34 (24.6%)
5.	Program helped to consider the alternative perspectives on complex issues.	3 (2.2%)	8 (5.8%)	32 (23.2%)	66 (47.8%)	29 (21%)

The second part of questionnaire is on contribution to learning, containing questions on what qualities the students achieved at the end of orientation

program. Majority of students 74(53.6%) agreed that the stated goal of the program were met, 34 (24.6%) of students had neutral opinion for the same question.

Out of 138 students 55 (39.9%), 58 (42%) & 63 (45.7%) had agreed that the orientation program helped them to improve or develop communication skills, creative ability and critical thinking respectively (Table 3).

Overall faculty assessment was also done in this study and reveals that majority of students 55 (39.9%)

had very good opinion on faculty time devotion to rounds and patient care. About 53 (38.4%), 52 (37.7%) & 57 (41.3%) of students had satisfactory opinion on questions on usually prompt, adhered to rounds & program schedule, & minimum interruptions respectively. Questions on teaching skills showed 68

Table 4: Distribution of students response on teaching skills of overall faculties of orientation program

Sl. No	Particulars	Moderate N (%)	Satisfactory N (%)	Very good N (%)	Excellent N (%)
Availability					
1.	Usually prompt	24(17.4%)	53(38.4%)	50(36.2%)	11(8%)
2.	Adhered to program schedules	15(10.9%)	52(37.7%)	48(34.8%)	23(16.7%)
3.	Interruptions minimum	21(15.2%)	57(41.3%)	37(26.8%)	23(16.7%)
4.	Enough time devoted to rounds & patient care	20(14.5%)	39(28.3%)	55(39.9%)	24(17.4%)
Teaching					
5.	Organised content logically	12(8.7%)	35(25.4%)	63(45.7%)	28(20.3%)
6.	Presented useful information at appropriate level	8(5.8%)	35(25.4%)	50(36.2%)	45(32.6%)
7.	Kept discussions focused on case/topic	8(5.8%)	40(39%)	54(39.1%)	36(26.1%)
8.	Asked questions appropriately	15(10.9%)	33(23.9%)	67(48.6%)	23(16.7%)
9.	Integrated social/ethical aspects	10(7.2%)	26(18.8%)	45(32.6%)	57(41.3%)
10.	Encouraged student to clear doubts	15(10.9%)	23(16.7%)	50(36.2%)	50(36.2%)
11.	Encouraged critical think	2(1.4%)	22(15.9%)	46(33.3%)	68(49.3%)

(49.3%), 50 (36.2%) & 57(41.3%) of students had an excellent opinion on encouragement of critical thinking, clearing doubts & integration of social & ethical issues respectively by the faculties (Table 4).

Conclusion

Even though overall quality or rating of orientation program was excellent slight modification were needed on time management and on feedback assessment. Assessment of faculties by students showed that modification is needed on devotion of time to rounds and patient care and adherence to program schedule. These factors were considered for further improvement of orientation program for subsequent batches.

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